

Princethorpe Infants and Nursery - Where having fun is a serious business!

Quo noster negotium est vester otium

Our classroom practice is made up of the learning experiences that determine the kinds of learners our school wants to develop. This classroom practice defines our curriculum.

Children are naturally curious. At Princethorpe Infants and Nursery we aim to capture that curiosity and turn it into deep enquiry. Learning is at the centre of a broad, deep, balanced and connected curriculum. It is important for children to know why they are learning things and what use it will be to them; real purpose embeds the thinking process which leads to active learning.

- Deep learning leads to interested and committed learners
- Critical thinking leads learners to research ideas and issues
- The key skills of investigation, exploration and recording lead to life-long self-efficacy.

“Our mission is to motivate people to learn. We will foster a love of learning and ensure that everyone’s skills and talents are well developed so that they can choose to enjoy life to the full. We aspire for every child, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to be the best that they can be; to be afforded the opportunities to surprise us and to go out into the world, ready to make it a better place.”

Our priorities are for...

- all children to work in a safe environment where their uniqueness is cherished;
- all children to learn at their own pace but to be the best that they can be;
- all children to attend and enjoy school;
- all learners to achieve personalised high standards;
- everyone to be safe from bullying and discrimination and to develop positive relationships;
- families to support children’s learning too;
- everyone to be physically, mentally and emotionally healthy to develop self-confidence.

We aim to...

deliver inspirational teaching.

provide a safe and secure environment.

provide differentiated, personalised learning for everyone.

encourage positive self-esteem and develop a sense of well-being for emotional development.

build strong family support for all our learners.

develop skills for life-long learning.

actively promote British values.

challenge discrimination and prejudicial behaviour.

encourage everyone to “have a go” when learning something new.

We encourage:

- creative thinking
- independent enquiring
- effective participation
- reflective practice
- team working
- active learning

so that children leave this school...

as independent learners;

resilient, resourceful and reflective;

thinking for themselves;

team players, learning together or alone;

excited about learning; wanting to know more;

respectful of others and tolerant of their beliefs and cultures;

ready to go out into the world and make it a better place;

the best that they can be.

1. **CLASSROOM PRACTICE:** *adults' intervention determines the quality of learning.*

When learning readiness is recognised and facilitated, children are in Vygotsky's *Zone of Proximal Development*. Evaluation for learning is used to determine the best support for each child before, during and after each lesson. Staff inspire children to discover the joy of success by "stretching their brains" through a learning struggle (Carol Dweck). Accurate marking and rigorous feedback using sub-level criteria ensures continuity and progression. We use a diagnostic marking protocol, which relates to the child's personal targets. Self-monitoring is encouraged, especially in KeyStage One. Achievement Grids are used termly to monitor progress and identify next targets for each child; staff aware of those pupils "nearly there" along with the different groups in the class. Pupil Progress Reviews, held half-termly, focus on individual children's learning needs.

Open, quality questions help to develop critical thinking and practitioners wait before prompting children for answers. Higher expectations from all staff mean that lessons move faster, with no time wasted, especially in KS1. Teaching Assistants model the use of vocabulary and questions by writing during carpet sessions. *Sustained Shared Thinking* enables staff to move learning along through the child's interests.

2. **LEARNING EXPERIENCES:**

Skills are modelled and encouraged through a holistic approach to child development and learning.

We believe that children's progress is maximised when their learning is linked, manageable and meaningful. We foster good attitudes and positive dispositions through this style of learning. A mix of rote learning and an enquiry-based approach encourages the development of thinking skills. The joined-up learning for children helps them to make sense of it all; small children do not separate their learning into subjects. Lane Clark's methodology of immersion in new concepts supports staff and children to evaluate learning and to apply new learning to a variety of situations. "Hooks" are used to entice learners and skills to develop are identified and monitored. There is a strong emphasis on basic skills, and phonics is taught systematically.

Staff recognise and applaud good learning behaviours:

The *Building Learning Power* (Guy Claxton) animals have the attributes of good learners; children emulate these attributes and improve their learning power. We provide opportunities for children to manage risk in a controlled environment, to think for themselves and to practise skills in a variety of learning situations. (For example: Forest School, Cookery lessons in the Children's Kitchen, Drama and PE/Sports.)

The *Teachers' Standards* are used to plan and deliver quality lessons. Staff's Continuing Professional Development is focussed and effective because it is led by subject-leaders' monitoring.

There is a rigorous focus on the application of knowledge and skills through enjoyable, active engagement and reflection, leading to deeper understanding:

Three star rubrics encourage the children to challenge themselves; they choose how difficult their learning is to be. Staff support them with their choice, moving them quickly on if tasks are too easy and teaching them to succeed when the task is difficult. As a direct consequence of this, children are better at gauging their learning and they move faster through challenges, making better than expected progress.

Having fun here is a serious business: practitioners use exciting, enjoyable experiences to inspire our pupils to learn and exploit careful planning, from meticulous assessment for learning strategies, to ensure rigorous learning. We have set aside certain weeks of the year to focus closely on certain aspects of the curriculum and raise the status of multi-talented learning: ARTSweek, Reading&Writing festival, Eco-Science Week. We have a Sportscoach and a Drama and Oracy Specialist who bring their specialisms to enhance the learning for the children each week. Writing is across the whole curriculum. Maths lessons are reinforced with practical activities. The use of iPads has dramatically increased the use of ICT.

3. THE KIND OF CHILDREN WE WANT TO DEVELOP:

Confident learners who...

- *take risks; have a growth mindset;*
- *aim high;*
- *have self-belief; take a pride in their learning;*
- *have a positive attitude to possible failure (not afraid of making mistakes!);*
- *enjoy success and achieving; seek new challenges; are enthusiastic ;*
- *make informed choices; learn from their mistakes;*
- *apply and transfer knowledge/skills;*
- *make links between learning;*
- *think for themselves; are motivated to learn more;*
- *share thinking and talk things through;*
- *don't mind not knowing; know how to find an answer; ask the experts;*
- *can explain their thinking;*
- *are methodical and have a plan;*
- *are resilient/ keep going / persevere; they try new things when stuck;*
- *are reflective in order to solve problems;*
- *engage with new learning/situations;*
- *get absorbed; can manage distractions;*
- *celebrate success!*

Guidelines

Access and Entitlement

We believe that every learner is entitled to a balanced curriculum that allows access to more than just the basic skills. We take account of unequal starting points and provide learning experiences that are planned to ensure breadth and depth, enabling progression for every individual irrespective of gender, ethnic background, age or disability. We aim to empower learners to become confident in their abilities that will prepare them for a purposeful adult and working life. (see also Pupil Premium funding)

Curriculum development

Curriculum content, organisation and documentation is regularly under review in order to fulfil legislative requirements and the changing needs of the school. The review of all curriculum policies will take place within a three-year period as laid out in the School Development Plan. The coverage of the Early Years and the KeyStage One Curriculum is organised within linked units of learning in the International Primary Curriculum. We have developed a four-year framework plan for each cohort. (See the Curriculum Map)

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Staff have a responsibility to a curriculum area to implement policy, monitor development and assist in the planning of the curriculum. The Deputy Headteacher will monitor *quality control* through assessments. The Senior Teachers will monitor the whole curriculum across the key stages for *continuity and progression*. The staff of each KeyStage have regular meetings to consider such matters as consistency and continuity in terms of content, assessment and record keeping.

Our work is evaluated regularly:

- Joint planning and moderation of children's work
- Focused classroom visits by the Headteacher, Senior Teachers and Subject Leaders.
- Termly meetings of whole staff to share a particular success and ensure consistency and continuity across year groups and key stages.
- Half-termly Pupil Progress Reviews are held with the Headteacher and/or the SENDco to monitor the progress of identified groups of children.
- Our Local Governor is regularly invited to visit school so she is better able to witness and evidence our work.

Curriculum Objectives

- To provide opportunities for children to communicate through speech and writing, and to listen with understanding.
- To provide stimulating reading material that enables children to read accurately, fluently and with understanding for their enjoyment.
- English is applied in all subject areas and enables children to articulate their understanding and learn with enthusiasm and independence.
- To assist in children's understanding and knowledge of mathematical language and the processes that they apply in a variety of ways
- To provide opportunities for children to explain the pattern and relationships which form the basis of Mathematics.
- To develop mathematical skills and apply them to practical solutions through problem-solving investigations.

- Mathematics is applied to other subject areas and enables children to develop enjoyment, interest and a positive attitude towards mathematical understanding.
- To encourage the development of scientific understanding through activities and discussion that provide systematic enquiry within a range of experiments and investigations of everyday life. The opportunities we give for question raising in Science enable children to use and understand scientific concepts and vocabulary.
- We give children opportunities to experience their own environment and the wider world both past and present.
- We encourage flexibility and creative thinking in overcoming difficulties and developing new approaches through investigation.
- Children should approach learning situations with enjoyment, interest and independence of thought and action. Working with others is a key skill that is promoted in equal measure.

Curriculum Organisation

Information Communication Technology, Oracy, Literacy and Numeracy skills run through the whole of our curriculum. Mathematics and English are taught both as discrete subjects and as integrated skills. Aspects of these, such as Phonics, are planned in a daily sequence of lessons. All other subjects are organised through a blocked unit of learning. Personal and Social Education is taught in specific sessions and also through Religious Education. British Values are promoted throughout the whole curriculum but especially activities for Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural development.

Curriculum Planning

There are two main key stages in School: Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage One.

Long term planning

The *Twelve Term Plan* provides teachers with an overview of what is taught throughout the school and identifies consistency of teaching. We have curriculum maps for subjects which identify knowledge, skills and understanding, and outline the progression of learning throughout our school.

Medium term planning

Teachers plan termly to identify learning objectives that link to the National Curriculum. Schemes of Learning indicate objectives, resources, differentiation, learning styles and assessment opportunities. Each year group plans detailed challenges in order to further develop the children's skills.

Short term planning

Teachers plan and organise their teaching on a weekly basis. Although this is a shared year group task, individual teachers organise other learning for the individual children in their class. Every session is evaluated; this evaluation feeds into the next short-term planning.